

Alternative Livelihoods Program (ALP)

Sector:	Agriculture
SO-1:	Reestablishing Food Security
Program Name:	ALP
Implementer:	Contracts just awarded to DAI (Nangarhar) Chemonics (Helmand) PADCO (Badakhshan)
Duration:	March 2005 – March 2009

The opium economy is pervasive and expanded to almost all provinces in 2004, and poppy was cultivated on 206,000 hectares (453,200 acres), with a total of 4,200 tons of opium produced in 2004. The Opium economy accounts for 60% of Afghanistan's GDP. Traffickers' and processors' income was \$2.2 billion in 2004, while farmers' income was \$0.6 billion – 2.3 million people are involved in the opium economy. On February 15, 2005, USAID signed two of the contracts for the Alternative Livelihoods Comprehensive Program. Chemonics won the task order to implement the AL program in Helmand and DAI won the task order to implement the AL program in Nangarhar. The third contract should be signed forthwith.



Cash-for-work given by Helmand Governor Sher Mohammad

The US Government's Five Counternarcotics Pillars

- Public Information
- Alternative Livelihoods
- Justice Reform/Law Enforcement
- Interdiction
- Eradication

Alternative livelihood efforts must be carefully sequenced with the other pillar activities, have Afghan ownership, focus on good governance, extend state presence into rural areas, and galvanize economic growth.

The Alternative Livelihoods Program Objectives

1. Accelerate licit economic growth and business activity in selected provinces in which poppy cultivation is thriving.

Activities

- Public works and small-scale infrastructure, including market development, access to water, road improvement, irrigation rehabilitation, and watershed management.
- Business development, including skilled trades and crafts, natural resource-based industry, agribusiness, training, facilitating investment and credit, market linkages, and creating an enabling business environment.
- Increasing production of competitive agricultural products and strengthening agriculture extension systems.

2. Provide immediate alternative sources of income to people that have been dependent on the opium economy.

Activities

- Labor-intensive cash-for-work programs (irrigation canal cleaning, road repair, soil erosion control projects).
- Income generation program for vulnerable groups (female headed households, destitute families, aged or infirmed who cannot participate in cash-for-work programs. Paying particular attention to creating employment for women, such as those focused on horticulture production, handicrafts, and community gardens.

Near-Term Accomplishments

- Short-term cash-for work projects underway in the two principle poppy-producing provinces of Afghanistan. In Helmand, 10,000 workers have been employed to date cleaning irrigation canals; in Nangarhar, 2,000 workers have been given work cleaning irrigation canals and drains that remove excess water and prevent soil salinity.
- The GOA has asked USAID to introduce alternative livelihoods activities into additional poppy-cultivating provinces. Provinces for expansion activities are still being discussed, but the programs will most likely begin with temporary employment activities similar to the cash-for-work programs currently underway in Nangarhar and Helmand.



Rural laborers at work in Helmand cleaning an irrigation drain